

GARBAGE GAZETTE



Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

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DEP To Implement Nickel Cadmium Battery Recycling Program

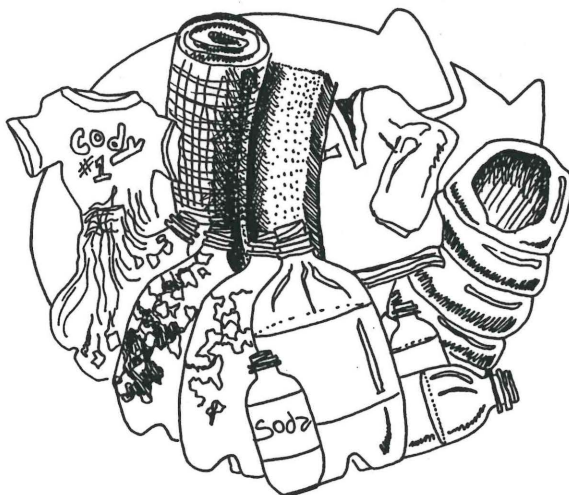
Under current state law, municipalities are required to recycle nickel-cadmium batteries when "service becomes available". To date, recycling options for nickel-cadmium batteries have been few and far between. However, on June 1, 1995, Commissioner Holbrook signed a letter committing the state to a nickel-cadmium battery recycling program instituted and financed by battery manufacturers and the companies that typically use these batteries.

Nickel-cadmium batteries are rechargeable and besides the common "D" cell batteries, are typically found in rechargeable screwdrivers, hand-held vacuums, and cordless toothbrushes and telephones. While these batteries are rechargeable and decrease the number of alkaline batteries entering the waste stream, it is important to collect and recycle them to mitigate any environmental impacts caused by their disposal. Exposure to cadmium can cause damage to the kidneys, liver, skeletal and reproductive systems, and is a suspected carcinogen. .

The Rechargeable Battery Recycling Corporation (RBRC) has established a program to recover and recycle batteries from both the residential and commercial/institutional sectors. RBRC will solicit retail outlets to participate in the program and will provide educational material on how to manage the collection of batteries. Participating retail outlets will accept nickel-cadmium batteries from their customers. The batteries are then prepared for shipment to a processing facility. Transportation and recycling fees are paid for by the RBRC. The RBRC will also pay for transportation and recycling of nickel-cadmium batteries from municipal collection points when certain amounts are accumulated. RBRC President David Thompson met with DEP officials on June 1, to discuss the details of the program and accept the letter of commitment. Connecticut is the fourth state in the nation to participate in the RBRC program. Thompson later met with the Connecticut Retail Merchant's Association to discuss ways to encourage retail outlets to participate in the program. The anticipated start date for the retail collection program is Fall of 1995.

Buy Recycled Conference and Trade Show a Terrific Success

The Recycling Office at CT DEP held an extremely successful conference and trade show in June at the Ramada in Meriden. Twenty-nine vendors displayed a wide array of products made from recycled materials including: plastic lumber, kitchen and bathroom tiles made from recycled glass, commercial compost products, retread tires, re-refined motor oil and a variety of paper products and office supplies. The 180 attendees had eight workshops to choose from, which were held throughout the day. Some of the topics covered were municipal purchasing, materials exchanges, reusable/remanufactured products, recycled content automotive products, and recycled products for construction and landscaping. Participants included local recycling coordinators, municipal purchasing officials, as well as purchasing agents from universities and private industry.



One of the days highlights was a "Recycled and Ready-to-Wear" Fashion Show. This event showcased numerous types of apparel made from recycled material donated by clothing manufacturers. Some of the items included: "Rubber-Necker" Tire ties (made from old tires), TYVEK ProtectiveWear (made from old milk jugs), Garbage Collection hats (made from fabric scraps), Roffee ski jackets insulated with EcoTherm (a material made from recycled plastic soda bottles), and gloves from Gates Gloves made from the same material. Winter caps made from a unique blend of wool and Ecospun fabric were donated by Schussler Knitting Mills. A variety of jackets, pants and hats made from Polartec fabric, loaned by the Malden Mills Company, were also modeled by DEP Waste Bureau staff. Jewelry made from recycled materials was loaned by the CRRA Visitors Center and a number of T-shirts, caps and tote bags (all made from recycled PET) were loaned by Signature Marketing. The fashion show was co-sponsored by the Connecticut Recyclers Coalition (CRC). Winston Averill, CRC President, served as Master of Ceremonies.

Feedback from participants was very positive. Many of those in attendance requested that additional, follow-up workshops be held in the near future. If you are interested in the resource materials that attendees received, please contact Judy Belaval or Meg Enkler at 424-3365.

Grass Bill Passes



A bill concerning the ban on the disposal of grass clippings was approved this session. **Senate Bill 1052**, delays the ban on the disposal of grass clippings until October 1997. The bill allows the DEP to develop regulations for grass composting and directs DEP to authorize pilot projects under which municipalities may provide for the composting of grass clippings. The bill directs the Commissioner to provide for a program of public information to promote the recycling of grass clippings by allowing the grass to decompose in place ("grasscycling"), or by composting at the property where the grass clippings are generated, or by composting grass clippings at a municipal or commercial composting facility.

The DEP is also evaluating the potential of applying grass clippings directly to cropland. The on-farm composting and land application of leaves has been successful, accounting for over 100,000 cubic yards of annual recycling capacity. On-farm methods to recycle grass clippings may be an additional option that is being evaluated.

Home Waste Audit Pilot Project Wins Award

The Connecticut Recyclers Coalition (CRC) Home Waste Audit Pilot Project Guidebook, "Your Little Green Book", designed by Pite Plus Marketing of Hartford, and the accompanying project promotional items (T-shirts, travel mugs and tote bags, all sporting the project logo) was awarded a first prize from the Professional Environmental Marketing Association (PEMA) in the "marketing communications program" category. The award was presented to Beth Pite at the Environmental Marketing Communications Excellence Awards ceremony held on May 9th at the World Trade Center in Boston during the New England Environmental Expo in May.



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